



**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
JUDICIAL BRANCH**

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

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**Testimony of the Honorable Lynda B. Munro
Chief Administrative Judge for Family Matters
Judiciary and Human Services Committee Joint Public Hearing
March 15, 2010**

**Senate Bill 368, An Act Concerning the Establishment Of Paternity and
Support and Enforcement of Orders in Title IV-D Child Support Cases**

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, in support of Senate Bill 368, *An Act Concerning the Establishment of Paternity and Support and Enforcement of Orders in Title IV-D Child Support Cases*. This bill, which was proposed by the Department of Social Services (DSS), seeks to make several beneficial changes to our child support statutes.

As members of the Committee may be aware, in IV-D child support cases, the Judicial Branch's Support Enforcement Services unit is responsible for monitoring child support awards for compliance with financial, medical insurance, and child care orders, as well as initiating court-based enforcement actions such as income withholdings and contempt applications when appropriate. Cases are heard by Family Support Magistrates.

I would like to draw your attention specifically to sections 38, 39, and 43. Sections 38 and 39 authorize service of process of income withholding orders on employers by electronic means, if the employer has agreed to accept electronic service. The Branch strongly supports this section because it will provide for quicker delivery of the income withholding order to the employer, which, in turn, will result in faster child support payments to the family. Electronic service will also be more cost-effective. Currently, most income withholding orders are served on employers by first class mail;

if the employer fails to respond, the notice must be served by certified mail, incurring more costs and adding more delay to the family 's receipt of child support.

The Judicial Branch also supports section 43, which provides our judicial marshals with the narrow authority to serve a capias mittimus on a child support obligor if the person is in the custody of the marshal, or within the court facility where the judicial marshal is providing security. This section does not diminish in any way the jurisdiction of state marshals who currently serve the majority of capias orders. Rather, it allows for the timely service of a capias mittimus if an obligor is in the presence of a judicial marshal; it also eliminates the possibility that a defendant could leave a courthouse before a state marshal or other proper officer could arrive to execute the warrant. With a backlog of unserved capias mittimus orders pending, any steps that can be taken to have these orders served more efficiently would aid in ensuring that Connecticut's families are getting the child support to which they are entitled.

Finally, we would also note our support for provisions that amend the law regarding income withholdings and those that make technical changes to the statutes regarding the Commission for Child Support Guidelines.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this bill.